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Letter dated 19 October 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

It has come to the attention of my delegation that a draft resolution is under consideration by the Security Council to renew the mandate of the Somalia and Eritrea Monitoring Group.

The Monitoring Group has once again concluded that it had found no evidence of Eritrean support to Al-Shabaab in Somalia, and the Governments of Eritrea and Djibouti have entrusted the State of Qatar to mediate their dispute. Therefore, the two justifications for the imposition of sanctions on Eritrea are non-existent. Eritrea appeals to the Security Council to immediately and unconditionally lift the sanctions and terminate the mandate of the Group regarding Eritrea.

Notwithstanding the unequivocal conclusion by the Monitoring Group, the draft resolution under consideration by the Security Council:

(a) Attempts to expand the mandate of the Monitoring Group by including a new and ambiguous paragraph on the conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia, under the pretext that the issue is reflected in the recent report of the Group. This justification is unacceptable. The mandate of the Group is to investigate the alleged role of Eritrea in Somalia and the border dispute between Djibouti and Eritrea, nothing more and nothing less.

The conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia is an issue of the occupied and the occupier. It must be broached in a different forum and under a different agenda item. The Security Council must compel Ethiopia to fulfil its treaty obligations and various Security Council resolutions, and respect the Charter of the United Nations by withdrawing from sovereign Eritrean territories, including the town of Badme.

This unwarranted attempt to expand the mandate of the Monitoring Group to deal with the conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia not only violates the letter and spirit of the Security Council resolutions but will also create a dangerous situation in the region. Ethiopia publicly admits that it is hosting, financing, arming and training several subversive Eritrean groups that intermittently unleash terrorist forays against the people of Eritrea. As recently as 7 July 2015, the Ethiopian Prime Minister, speaking to his Parliament, stated that Ethiopia would take military action against Eritrea.

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Consequently, any attempt by any country to include a new paragraph in order to expand the mandate of the Monitoring Group is a sinister political ploy and manoeuvre that must be rejected.

(b) Infringes on Eritrean sovereignty and political independence. Regarding the Eritrean financial sector, it makes unwarranted demands by completely misinterpreting the provisions of paragraph 12 of resolution 2023 (2011).

(c) Fails to factually reflect the border dispute between Djibouti and Eritrea. The Presidents of Djibouti and Eritrea have signed an agreement entrusting the State of Qatar to undertake a mediation role to reach a resolution of the border dispute and settle the issue of prisoners of war and missing persons. The Security Council, in its statement to the press dated 11 June 2010, endorsed that agreement and called upon both parties to engage in the mediation process fully and in good faith.

If any of the parties have complaints, the appropriate forum is the Government of the State of Qatar. It must be underlined that the question of Djibouti and Eritrea, including the issue of prisoners of war and missing persons, is not under the purview of the Monitoring Group's mandate.

I would be most grateful if the present letter was brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council and circulated as a document of the Council.

(*Signed*) Girma Asmerom **Tesfay**
Ambassador and Permanent Representative